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INTRODUCTION

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I

When the novelist Amitav Ghosh gave a lecture in Montreal a few years ago, he began by describing, as writers often do, the early influences on his writing career. In the course of his talk, he conjured up two very different images of the cultural impact of translation, images that will serve as useful reference points for the issues in this book.

Ghosh spoke first about his grandfather’s library, recalling the look and smell of the books lined up on the shelf, and remembering their titles and origins. These books were almost all translations into Bengali, he noted. They were works by European authors, many of whom had been Nobel Prize winners. It was a collection of books which could be found, he supposed, in much the same form in all the corners of the Empire, either in English or, as here, translated into local languages. These translations represented, for him and for his grandfather, entrance into the world of European letters. They also imposed a certain canon of recognized works into a foreign setting, satisfying a certain display function, identifying middle-class tastes in genteel settings. They made up a somewhat artificial and heterogeneous export culture, which arrived in alien climes as a ready-made unit, detached from its separate contexts of origin, signifying the power of European print culture as the horizon of colonialism.

Later in his talk, Ghosh referred to another kind of translation. He spoke of the powerful tradition of Indian storytelling, and I quote here from similar remarks he made in the introduction to an anthology of Indian stories:
It has been said, with good reason, that nothing that India has given the world outside is more important than its stories. Indeed, so pervasive is the influence of the Indian story that one particular collection, *The Panchatantra (The Five Chapters)* is reckoned by some to be second only to the Bible in the extent of its global diffusion. Compiled early in the first millennium, *The Panchatantra* passed into Arabic through a sixth century Persian translation, engendering some of the best known of middle eastern fables, including parts of *The Thousand and One Nights*. The stories were handed on to the Slavic languages through Greek, from Hebrew to Latin (1270), and thence to German and Italian. From the Italian version came the famous Elizabethan rendition of Sir Henry North, *The Morall Philosophy of Doni* (1570). These stories left their mark on collections as different as those of La Fontaine and the brothers Grimm, and today they are inseparably part of a global heritage of folklore. (1994, 35)

Ghosh also referred to the tradition of rewriting, which is so central to the diffusion of the *Puranas*, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharatha* within the Indian cultures and abroad.

The two images of translation which Ghosh evokes conjure up two very different understandings of cultural diffusion. The first kind comes from outside Indian culture, involves written texts and serves the imperialist, Orientalizing cause. The second kind emanates from within India, is essentially oral, involves a much looser notion of the text, interacts intensely with local forms of narrative and is a revigorating and positive global influence. The first kind of translation, from Ghosh’s point of view, results in a static and potentially oppressive array of cultural goods; the second is a continuous life-giving and creative process.

These two examples can perhaps help us to understand the kinds of questions we are asking in this volume. What are the roles that translations play within the colonial and postcolonial contexts? Do they serve only to impose an alien and oppressive presence on a foreign culture, or are they part of a process of exchange which involves an active chain of response, a vivifying interaction?

Translations during the colonial period, we know, were an expression of the cultural power of the colonizer. Missionaries, anthropologists, learned Orientalists chose to translate the texts which corresponded to the image of the subjugated world which they wished to construct. Translations materialized modes of interpretation whose terms were rarely questioned. The title of the volume in honour of the celebrated British social anthropologist Evans-Pritchard, *Translating Culture* (1962), comes to represent a
whole range of interpretive activities whose final meaning rested exclusively within the colonizers’ language. Colonized cultures were texts whose vast spaces were contained within the hermeneutic frames of Western knowledge. “Translation” refers not only to the transfer of specific texts into European languages, but to all the practices whose aim was to compact and reduce an alien reality into the terms imposed by a triumphant Western culture.

Translation was part of the violence, then, through which the colonial subject was constructed. But this version of events does not tell the whole story of the processes through which the culture of the colonized and of the colonizers came to interact. As Robert Young reminds us, the vocabulary which has been available to describe cultural contact has been drastically limited.

It is only recently that cultural critics have begun to develop accounts of the commerce between cultures that map and shadow the complexities of its generative and destructive processes. Historically, however, comparatively little attention has been given to the mechanics of the intricate processes of cultural contact, intrusion, fusion and disjunction. (1995, 5)

Young points to language itself as providing the most revealing traces of cultural contact. Hybrid languages, like pidgins and creoles, show patterns of interpenetration and overlay which reflect the actual processes of contact.

Pidgin and creolized languages constitute powerful models because they preserve the real historical forms of cultural contact. The structure of pidgin—crudely, the vocabulary of one language superimposed on the grammar of another—suggests a different model from that of a straightforward power relation of dominance of colonizer over colonized. (5)

It is surprising that Young does not look to translation as a site for investigating intercultural contact. Even more than pidgin languages, which came to exist in only a limited number of settings, translations would seem to be the terrain Young is looking for, the impressionable surface which preserves the intricate tracings of contact. Translations materialize exactly the sort of overlay which Young sees as operating in pidgin, preserving the “real historical forms” of cultural contact. They report on areas of interchange between colonizer and colonized; they also reveal the nature of the interaction.

It is the aim of this volume to engage precisely in the kind of work which Young was pointing to: the detailed work of revealing “the intricate
processes of cultural contact, intrusion, fusion and disjunction. The series of studies presented here, analyzing specific translating situations, provides a rigorous basis upon which we can more fully understand the dynamics of postcolonial transactions. Our aim in preparing this collection was to emphasize critical work which studied relations between individual translation projects and the institutional pressures promoting or hindering them. All of the articles are framed by an understanding of postcolonial cultural dynamics, and use the specific situations of language exchange to test out categories of analysis and comparison.

The strength of these articles speaks well of the current moment of research in translation studies, and the very fertile links which are being created between literary and cultural theory. The internationalization of networks of translation studies has led to new conversations among scholars from a wide variety of countries. This sudden diversification and true globalization of the field is exciting. But it leads to the obvious need for careful explanation of specific contexts, for thorough understanding of the historical situations which have given rise to present-day cultural dynamics. It also implies that theory itself must be understood as being positioned, both ideologically and culturally. This does not mean that any specific researcher is obliged to speak "for" or "out of" the circumstances of geography or history, but that we must recognize that entire discourses are shaped by the contexts from which they emerge, and that our use of them is influenced by this history. Transnational culture studies has tended to operate entirely in English, at the expense of a concern for the diversity of languages in the world. The focus on translation within the global context is necessary to draw attention to language issues in cultural exchange.

The studies in this volume cover a wide variety of geographical and linguistic contexts, but all use translation as a lens through which to define and assess the dynamics of postcolonialism. India seems to be a particularly welcome site for such studies but investigations into the cultural histories of Ireland, China, Canada, the United States and Latin America are equally suggestive in questioning the terms of cultural exchange. What unites this work is attention to unequal power relations and the voices of marginality within literary commerce.

II

It is not surprising that much of the work on power and ideology in translation has come out of postcolonial contexts, like India, Canada, Ireland or Brazil, and has been sustained by theoretical currents like feminism and poststructuralism. Translators, as cultural and economic intermediaries, are often members of marginalized groups. Historically, they occupy socially
fragile positions, on the fringes of power. When they are, in addition, members of colonial or neocolonial societies, their work is saturated with the knowledge which comes from daily exposure to the conflictual aspects of language exchange. They are attentive to the fact that cultural traffic does not circulate freely about the globe, that its flow is regulated by the existence and condition of trade routes, the availability of willing vehicles and the needs and pleasures which cultural commerce caters to. In other words, they know that the circulation of translations is not to be equated with the logic of the gift but with the rules of commodity exchange (Frow 1996). Postcolonial contexts heighten awareness that translations are solicited and exchanged according to rules of trade and ownership, which are both commercial and ideological.

Nevertheless, every writer using the concept of “postcolonialism” today is surely aware that this term has become increasingly ambiguous and contested. A rich body of writing has grown up in an attempt to identify the confusing and misleading implications of the term for cultural and political analysis. Why continue to use the term in this anthology? Anne McClintock, in the conclusion to her forceful critique of the term, reminds us that there cannot be the imposition of any new “single term” to replace postcolonialism. There is no one term which will allow “rethinking the global situation as a multiplicity of powers and histories...” She calls for a proliferation of historically nuanced theories and strategies, which will more adequately account for the “currently calamitous dispensations of power” (1995, 302).

In the context of translation studies, the term “postcolonialism” remains useful in suggesting two essential ideas. The first is the global dimension of research in translation studies; the second is the necessary attention to the framework through which we understand power relations and relations of alterity.

If there is one central image which postcolonialism conjures up, it is the image of the map. To enter into the postcolonial world is to see cultural relations at a global level, to understand the complexities of the histories and power relations which operate across continents. For translation studies and literary study in general, adopting a postcolonial frame means enlarging the map which has traditionally bound literary and cultural studies. It means moving beyond the boundaries of Europe and North America, and following more expansive itineraries, moving into new territories. But this excursion into new domains of culture—India, Africa, South America, Asia—must take into account the profound scars of colonialism and its sequels, scars which have shaped not only its victims but also its perpetrators. And so “we” must understand our own place on this map. Where do
"we" belong, where are "we" speaking from, and on the basis of what particular kinds of knowledge?

These questions bring with them a renewed consciousness of the power adhering to particular sites of research. Nevertheless, our remapping of power relationships does not have to consist of single, one-way vectors. If "postcolonial criticism bears witness to the unequal and uneven forces of cultural representation involved in the contest for political and social authority within the modern world order" (Bhabha 1992, 437), it also reveals the complexity of the workings of this authority. The overwhelming concern of postcolonial critique has been to carve out a space of reflection which avoids simplistic characterizations of power. Ania Loomba makes clear that this investigation must include both the ways in which colonial modes of thinking were introduced and the ways in which they exist today:

[T]he spread of English literature teaching cannot be explained away as the simple effectiveness of British policies; neither can its persistence in contemporary institutions be understood as a straightforward indication of Indians' continued subjection, a neocolonial conspiracy or a simple nostalgia for the West. Both kinds of inquiry—into nineteenth-century or modern Indian interaction with English literature—cannot be usefully conducted within the parameters of either a theory which insists on the starkness of the colonial encounter, or another where native recipients are entirely conditioned or devastated by the master culture. (1995, 311)

She emphasizes the interactive aspects of colonial educational practices—despite the asymmetry of the interaction. Such demonstrations make clear that "postcolonial" stands today as a term that problematizes relations of alterity:

The term post-colonial is not merely descriptive of this society rather than that, or of then and now. It re-reads colonization as part of an essentially transnational transcultural global process—and it produces a decentred, diasporic or global rewriting of earlier, nation-centred imperial grand narratives... It obliges us to re-read the binaries as forms of transculturation, of cultural translation, destined to trouble the here/there binaries forever. (Hall 1996, 247)

Stuart Hall's reformulation of the binaries of postcolonialism is especially pertinent for translation. By announcing the necessity of troubling the "here/there" binaries forever, he rescues translation from the threat of incommensurabilities lodged in certain polarized positions. Adopting a postcolonial framework would not necessarily imply, as Vijay Mishra and Bob Hodge suggest, a focus on the untranslatable authenticity of local
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realities. Referring to Rushdie’s novel *Midnight’s Children*, they establish a hypothetical opposition between a postmodern reading, which would emphasize “play and deferral,” and a postcolonial one, which

will locate the meaning of the untranslated words and the special, culture-specific resonances of the text. It might even offer a radical reshaping or rethinking of what Habermas has called our “communicative rationality”. The post-colonial text persuades us to think through logical categories which may be quite alien to our own. For a text to suggest even as much is to start the long overdue process of dismantling classical orientalism. (Mishra and Hodge 1991, 382)

For Mishra and Hodge, a postcolonial reading would insist on untranslatability and the affirmation of radical difference. Such an understanding of cultural relations and of Rushdie’s text neglects the alterities which compose *Midnight’s Children*, the processes of translation which are internal to the novel. While Mishra and Hodge are right to ask the question “Does the postcolonial exist only in ‘english’?” (287), and to remind readers of the unequal exchange values of language, the differential circuits through which language intersects with market trends, political pressures, historical traditions and literary values, they also oversimplify the relation between the postmodern (West) and the postcolonial (East). In fact the postcolonial condition implies an unceasing flow of cultural traffic, but this flow operates according to different time schemes and achieves differing degrees of equivalence.

Detailed studies of specific translating situations provide crucial sites through which to view relations of alterity and to understand their complexity. The example of the Bengali Renaissance in the nineteenth century is particularly rich. It demonstrates the ways in which translations, though undertaken as acts of colonial mimicry, though undertaken under the aegis of colonial power, can have unpredictable effects and can become stimulants to the development of national languages. It was at the initiative of the East India Company and the European missionaries, explains Partha Chatterjee,

that the first printed books are produced in Bengali at the end of the eighteenth century and the first narrative prose compositions commissioned at the beginning of the nineteenth. (1993, 7)

During the first half of the nineteenth century, English emerges as the most powerful vehicle of intellectual influence on a new Bengali elite.

The crucial moment in the development of the modern Bengali language comes, however, in midcentury, when this bilingual elite makes
It a cultural project to provide its mother tongue with the necessary linguistic equipment to enable it to become an adequate language for "modern" culture. (Chatterjee 1993, 7)

This equipment involves printing presses, publishing houses, newspapers, magazines, literary societies ... and the production of translations into Bengali. Chatterjee suggests that this new national culture, though created through interaction with European influences, remained separate and distant from the "colonial intruder" (7). For instance, though the novel was the principal form through which the bilingual elite in Bengal fashioned a new narrative prose, the frequency of the "direct recording of living speech" in the Bengali popular novel (which often makes it look like a play) suggests, according to Chatterjee, that "the literati, in its search for artistic truthfulness, apparently found it necessary to escape as often as possible the rigidities of that prose" (8).

The example of Bengali literature provides rich material for exploration and theoretical debate. While most analysts would agree that the Bengali Renaissance of the nineteenth century was indeed a "translational" phenomenon, they would not necessarily agree on the value of its effects. Are these translational processes to be understood simply as the effects of cultural imperialism, or rather as transaction, as "an interactive, dialogic, two-way process involving complex negotiation and exchange" (Trivedi 1993) and therefore as a salutary mode of aesthetic renewal? Today’s processes of globalization raise similar questions regarding cultural exchange. The flow of translations continues to actively promote the power of First World cultures. How can the trade imbalance in translations be rectified so that the voices of the silenced might be heard?

The postcolonial frame in translation studies allows exploration of such questions by drawing useful parallels among a large number of disparate contexts. The language struggles in Ireland at the turn of this century, which used translation as a "catalyst for renewal and invention" (Cronin 1996, 126) and which made English into the literary language of Ireland, resonate richly with the contemporary situation in India. Michael Cronin draws a portrait of Ireland as traversed "from the beginning" by intense activities of translation. Nationalism, paradoxically, served as a vehicle for the promotion of English (92).

The [nationalist and republican movements'] faith in translation is strong because of an implied belief that an Irish nation can express its own distinctness in the English language. Learning and literature in the Irish language can be carried across the language divide and used as building materials for a new Irish identity. (116-17)
And today, adds Cronin, “translation is our condition” (199). Surely, the
same could be said of many other national and protonational situations in
the world today whose ongoing struggle with the English language origi-
nated in colonial domination. At the same time, the postcolonial frame obliges
us to adopt a critical attitude toward the relation between nation and culture,
rather than to use these terms uncritically as the basis for our understanding
of literary exchange.

The “map” of postcolonialism is not, then, just a trace of the one-
way movements of power. Nor is it just a geographical map. It exposes the
marks of history and the continuing tensions of power relations. Ethical
relations are also to be plotted onto this map. What postcolonialism means,
for literary and cultural studies, for translation studies, then, is briefly this:
that we understand all exchange within the context of global power rela-
tions. That we see cultural traffic, the movement of books, plays, ideas,
languages, as involved in the dynamics of exchange dictated by colonial-
ism and its consequences.

This means that translations become part of a larger picture, which
includes the economic and political frameworks through which ideas are
circulated and received. In other words, postcolonialism is about rethinking
the ways in which cultures relate to one another, recognizing their internal
differences and also questioning the poles from which and to which cultural
products travel. It makes us increasingly aware of the ways in which hybridity
has come to complicate relations of exchange and trouble categories of
alterity. The poles of Otherness which supported relations of oppression
and contestation have been weakened by the fragmentary nature of contem-
porary cultural identities.

III

The first block of readings in the volume take a critical look at the implica-
tions of postcolonial theory for translation studies. The essays question the
intellectual and ethical underpinnings of the postcolonial model, and its
applicability to specific national situations. In one of the three papers in the
volume focussing on Ireland, Michael Cronin identifies translation as an
essential part of the normative process which brings colonies into the “Im-
perial Archive,” reducing the unruly expanses of conquered territory into
bits of information which can be stored and accessed. Through his analysis
of Brian Friel’s emblematic play Translations, and the enterprise of the
British Ordnance Survey of Ireland, which is its pretext, Cronin highlights
the links between translation, information gathering and falsification. Friel’s
play is a precise and evocative demonstration of the ways in which British
power uses translation to "cover" the Irish landscape with the Imperial grid. Translation is seen as a form of violence which redefines the terms of legitimacy.

Like other theorists working within the postcolonial paradigm, Cronin balances his exposition of the oppressive functions of translation with a view of its potential for resistance. He suggests that translation—in its alliance with falsification—has had powerful creative capacities within Irish literary history, where translations without originals seem to proliferate. He also points to outlaws and marginal groups as exemplary translators. Marginalized groups, he suggests, often as a result of nomadic displacement or territorial dispossession, are generally much more implicated in the practice of translation than dominant, settled communities.

What is the relevance of a "postcolonial" translation theory for China, a country which has never, strictly speaking, experienced colonialism? What is to be lost or gained by adopting the postcolonial stance? This is the question Leo Chan develops with a great deal of pertinence in his article. Like other Western wares now available on the market in China, Western theory is now available to Chinese scholars, who must decide how it will be used. Can postcolonial theory help explain China's ongoing negotiation with Western influences, as well as its role as an aggressive purveyor of its own cultural models within Asia? Chan suggests that "postcolonialism" as a term can be used very broadly to refer to the question of positionality—where one places oneself in relation to existing modes of interpreting reality.

Chan's article considers two positions taken by Chinese translation theorists and translators as a response to the cultural influences of the West. A strong tradition opposes the introduction of Europeanized structures and expressions into the Chinese language, fearing that they will result in the inevitable contamination of the language. More recently, however, counter-arguments have highlighted the resilience of the language. Chan shows how these various positions are situated within translation practice, translation theory and cultural theory. He also shows how these debates take up issues very similar to those involved in postcolonialism. The relationship between language theory, cultural theory and the historical and political context of the changing relations of China with the West has to be understood within the body of Chinese cultural history. Chan remains wary, however, of using postcolonial theory as a template. The uniqueness of the Chinese case forces us to revise the parameters within which postcolonial theorizing functions.

Diptiranjan Pattanaik and Shantha Ramakrishna both present strong models of the ways in which translation can be used as a tool of cultural affirmation. For Pattanaik, it is the strength of endotrophic translation that has contributed to the growth of Oriya nationhood. Ramakrishna points,
rather, to what she calls "counter-translation" as a strategy for using translation as an anti-hegemonic tool. Both ground their analyses in different spaces of India: Pattanaik in the cultural life of the state of Orissa (situated on the Eastern coast below Bengal), Ramakrishna more broadly referring to the Indian nation as a whole.

Pattanaik begins his essay with an amusing and telling anecdote. Friends who were critical of a short story he had written in the Oriya language for a local journal were quite thrilled with it when they saw it published in English translation. They were genuinely impressed by the novelty of its theme, its dramatic presentation and its message, whereas they had found the Oriya original to be trite. They had not recognized the English story as a translation of the Oriya. Pattanaik uses the story to stand as an emblem of the prestige of the English language in India today and the "aura" which translations can confer.

In Oriya, in particular, he adds, translation has traditionally been held in high esteem. Like other regional literary languages in India, Oriya was nourished through translation, specifically translations from Sanskrit texts. This process of "endotropic" translation, in contrast to the translations toward English, have historically served to build the distinct cultural identity of Oriya-speaking people and acted, as well, as an instrument of democratization. This can be seen, in particular, in the translations of Sarala Das in the fifteenth century. His "transcreations" of Sanskrit classics were decisive in developing an Oriya literary language. At this time, when the Oriya kingdom was undergoing a period of expansion, as well as in the nineteenth century, when a movement sought to form a separate Oriya province in colonial India, endotropic translations were associated with the consolidation of Oriya nationhood. The difference is that under colonial administration it was no longer Sanskrit texts but Western novels which became originals for endotropic translations. Pattanaik points to the heroic efforts of Prafulla Das, whose small publishing house produced more than seventy world classics in Oriya translation.

And what about exotropic translation? Translation into English has had none of the democratizing zeal of endotropic translation, according to Pattanaik, and feeds the needs of Western educated audiences at home and abroad. Translation into English may bring some international attention to a literature which would otherwise not be known at all, but has none of the powerful nourishing effects which come from translating into Oriya. These must be maintained if the Oriya literary culture is to prevail and to generate new works for a national and an international audience.

Ramakrishna identifies the cultural authority of what she calls "counter-translations," translations which by their choice of object and manner of
translation shift attention away from the British colonial legacy. The British introduced little European literature to India. Whether they were conventionally “faithful” or not, Vidyarthi’s adaptation of a novel by Victor Hugo or Premchand’s translations of Anatole France are contributions to a more diversified literary culture, Ramakrishna argues. These translations from the French were a deliberate effort to turn attention away from British models. Contemporary efforts at such “counter-translation” activity are the translation of Sri Aurobindo’s work *Savitri* into Urdu (as a gesture of anticommunalism) or Suman Venkatesh’s translations from French into English of documents of the period 1781-1796, on the history of Mysore. Critics and reviewers, she adds, must be sensitive to the cultural projects of translators as well as the variety of practices of “fidelity” which they might choose.

In parallel to Michael Cronin’s evocation of translators as marginal beings, Jean-Marc Gouanvic focusses on resistance in translation by looking at marginalized groups as exemplary translator figures. While Cronin mentions nomads, traders and outlaws, or such communities as the Huguenots and Irish Catholics, who were forced to accept restrictions in their access to power, Gouanvic considers the “maroon,” the runaway slave who succeeds in living outside of the control of the white man. Gouanvic develops his analysis through the ideas of Pierre Bourdieu, insisting on the directionality of translation, its strategic use in imposing social values by the source culture on a target culture. Attempting not to idealize the space of the “maroon,” which though it represents a breaking away from the structures of white power nevertheless remains subject to it in many ways, Gouanvic offers this figure as a potent evocation of marginality—as do a number of contemporary Francophone writers in the Caribbean. “Maroon” translators do not play according to the laws of the market; they are heretics. As such, they are associated with the subversive power of pseudo-translations. They transgress borders and defy systems of classification. The evocation of this conflictual space seems to Gouanvic to offer a more satisfying paradigm than that of hybridity, which he suggests is simply a mask for the reinforced power of the dominator.

Gouanvic’s critique of hybridity as a kind of “mystical fusion” is a serious challenge to the current popularity of the term (as evidenced in the essays of Wolf and Tymoczko). He joins here an important debate on the political implications of hybridity within postcolonial studies and specifically the understanding of the colonial enactment of cultural power (see, for instance, Loomba 1995).

Elizabeth Fitzpatrick’s essay on Balai Pustaka in the Dutch East Indies provides valuable information on a colonial enterprise which had an indisputable, though paradoxical, effect on the development of modern
Indonesian literature. Balai Pustaka was an agency of the Dutch colonial government, active from about 1905 to World War II, whose purpose was to provide books for the native population of the East Indies colonies. Fitzpatrick's paper is devoted to correcting the perception that Balai Pustaka was the decisive factor in the emergence of modern Indonesian literature. She shows how the cultural agency's political and social agenda brought only a limited, ideological influence to bear, and that the interactions between creation and translation which worked to create Indonesian literature were more complex. Balai Pustaka worked to promote European values and to maintain Dutch power, at the same time adding to the rich mix of influences which have contributed to Indonesian culture. Balai Pustaka is an example of how a "small" colonial power invested in scholarship to provide the leverage necessary to implement policy. The agency conducted a wide range of language and cultural policies, including an aggressive translation policy into Malay of the European classics. Fitzpatrick shows that Dutch efforts were aimed toward diverting attention from discussions of nationalism and independence in an attempt to control the cultural discourse of emerging Indonesia.

Both Michaela Wolf's and Maria Tymoczko's contributions insist on hybridity as a central marker of postcolonial practices. Wolf uses hybridity to develop an understanding of cultural relations that goes beyond limited conceptions of alterity in order to include the ongoing differences within and among cultures. Postcolonialism can be understood as a reading and writing practice which questions the production of knowledge concerning the other. Translation, like ethnography, is faced with issues of asymmetrical authority and legitimacy in the production of cultural knowledge. Wolf uses Homi Bhabha's definition of the hybrid as an "active moment of challenge and resistance to the dominant cultural power" which transforms the cultural from the source of conflict to an element of production, opening onto a "Third Space" which accommodates a whole fund of syncretisms, recombinations and mechanisms of acculturation. The Third Space is a space of cultural creation, where translation is a "grounds for intervention," creating texts that resist categorization and renaturalization. Translation no longer bridges a gap between two different cultures, but becomes a strategy of intervention through which newness comes into the world, where cultures are remixed. To speak of culture as translation is to stress the fact that cultures develop by negotiating and mixing, and that difference and incommensurability predominate over identities.

The existence of large diasporic and migrant communities in movement across the globe makes any fixed definition of communities difficult. The congruence between nation and language can no longer be taken as the basis for defining a literary community. Consider, for example, the
introduction to a recently published introduction to comparative literature written in French. The author begins by defining a “foreign” work of literature as one which is not “addressed to me.” He seems to assume that all works of literature originally written in French are addressed to a single French-language community (Chevrel 1989). Such an assumption takes no account of the internal fragmentation of the population of France, whether along class, gender or ethnic lines. The author is postulating the existence of a single, French-language literary community. The introduction of Francophone studies as a new framework for studying literature has done much to disturb the collusion between language and culture; yet the consequences of these shifts have not always been transferred to translation studies.

Gayatri Spivak’s work as theoretician and translator exposes the complexities of cultural exchange within a disposition where “metropolitans,” “colonials” and “migrants” compete for subject positions. Her work troubles the easy identifications of “foreign” and “home” culture, introducing the figure of the translator whose identity is subsumed neither by the host nor the receiving culture, who has no single “home” to offer to the translated work. Translations, like the original works of diasporic writers, become caught up in networks of readership which involve audiences which are not defined by one national frame. New market trends arise which solicit some kinds of voices and suppress others. By foregrounding her own identity problems as a translator, Spivak draws attention to the kinds of forces at play in today’s global literary commerce. Providing a preface and a postface to her translations of Mahasweta Devi, she ensures that the reader has a contextualized and informed understanding of the difficult text she is reading. In insisting on her own pivotal role as critic and translator, Spivak (in Devi 1995) replaces the “international” itineraries of translation with more specific and devious cultural routes.

In a phrase which has been widely echoed, Salman Rushdie claimed that migrants are “translated beings.” We can understand this expression to highlight the fact that individuals who move from one culture to another are transformed by the many cultural references they collect and reposition. Their selfhood and identity are destabilized and refashioned as they negotiate new realities. But migrants are also active agents of cultural exchange; they “translate” as they are “translated.” The texts of those authors who are poised between communities, who are in the process of creating new literary identities, such as Rushdie, Edouard Glissant and Derek Walcott, stand on the border between writing and translation, infusing both of these activities with new meanings.

Maria Tymoczko’s essay pursues the investigation of hybrid practices by investigating the areas where postcolonial writing and translation
overlap. Can it be said that a novel like Amos Tutuola’s *The Palm-Wine Drinkard* is “like” a translation or, even, “is” a translation? The entire text, suggests a critic, is “bent and twisted into the service of a different language.” These texts no longer “mediate” between one culture and the other, but show in what ways they come together as new, hybrid cultural realities. Postcolonial writing is different from translation, Tymoczko acknowledges, and yet both involve similar representations and transpositions of language and culture. She chooses to focus on the ability of such texts to evoke two languages simultaneously. This radical bilingualism and polyphony typically give both translations and postcolonial texts much of their evocative appeal and subversive power. The example provided here is that of James Joyce and his “covert” use of the Irish language, through the use of proper names, in particular. Tymoczko links Joyce’s uses of Irish with similar textual phenomena to be found in twentieth-century North African postcolonial Francophone literary works. The bilingual reader has a different experience of the text than the monolingual one. Tymoczko insists particularly on the way in which “conventional translation equivalents” are used as a vehicle of inserting meanings from a colonized people’s native language into a postcolonial text in the colonizers’ language. The hybrid text creates a “crisis of authority,” contesting forms of domination. Concluding that translations and postcolonial literary works are not to be treated as the same, she nevertheless points to their functional and formal similarities as manifestations of “double consciousness” and “cultural recuperation.” Both Wolf and Tymoczko show, then, how notions of hybridity are essential today to investigate not the collapse of differences but the ever-moving lines against which they take shape. Michaela Wolf, like Leo Chan, reminds us of the very diverse linkages between colonialism and empire. Wolf draws together imperialism and colonialism, showing how the disintegration of empires like the Austro-Hungarian Empire can be compared to a process of decolonization, leading to “fragmentary, dismembered, exhausted” remnants. Both “postimperial” and “postcolonial” countries remain determined from the outside, while “the empty spaces inside are filled with nationalism, fundamentalism and essentialism.” She draws attention to the continuous nature of the process, the violence of “aftershocks” like the breakup of Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia so many years after the initial defeat of the empire.

The second block of essays is devoted to detailed analyses of specific cultural practices situated at the border between colonialism and postcolonialism. Brian Friel’s important play *Translations*, briefly discussed by Michael Cronin, is the subject of sensitive and detailed analysis by Maria-Elena Doyle. Doyle relates the use of dialect in this play to the political ideology and aesthetic practice of the Field Day Theatre Company, of which Friel is a director. In particular, Doyle takes as her central focus the use of dialect in the play, as well as the use of dialect in plays translated for the
company. What is the political valence of dialect in the polarized English/Gaelic context of Northern Ireland? Promoting a form of cultural hybridity which speaks of the fusion of identities that embodies Northern Ireland, dialect also instills a sense of community in the public. Within the play Translations, the choice of language and accent point to the complex layerings of meaning in the play and to the rich and conflictual history to which it contributes. Doyle notes the fact that three of Field Day’s first six plays were translations of foreign works, a “strange” fact considering that the company is devoted to creating an Irish sense of identity. But in translating some of the central canonical texts of Western drama, Doyle argues, Field Day’s writers took the opportunity to “place their stamp on these texts,” a form of dramatic appropriation characteristic of postcolonial theatre in general. Theatre thus becomes a particularly effective mode of counter-discourse. The attempt to skirt English texts recalls similar attempts in India to circumvent what Ashis Nandy has called the “unbreakable dyadic relationships” between colonizer and colonized. Two of these plays are translated into dialect. This practice in many ways echoes that of the retranslation into “Québécois” during the same period, analyzed by Annie Brisset and by Louise Ladouceur, constituting a symbolic act of rupture. Providing a highly nuanced and complex reading of the values of dialect within the play Translations as well as within the translated plays, Doyle is obliged to conclude that the ultimate valence of dialect is as unsure as the “we” to which it refers. But for Doyle what will remain is the appeal to the importance of language in these theatre works. Language itself, the escape from silence, becomes the ultimate nexus of meaning.

Louise Ladouceur’s essay on the “double coloniality” at work in the translation of Canadian theatre also draws attention to the historical basis for specific translation strategies. She shows how the very different statuses of the receiving languages—the dominance of English and Anglo-Saxon culture in North America, the fragile minority status of French—shape the overarching patterns of translation. When Quebec theatre is translated into English, very often the marks of the original context are transported with it. The titles of the plays, often left in French, point to “an untranslatable reality to which an anglophone public can hardly identify.” They also point to an idealized reality, a “quaintness” which seems to evoke a Quebec of the past. This is not the case in the other direction, where adaptation and “dialectization” seemed to be the rule. Ladouceur’s findings here echo those of Annie Brisset, whose Sociocritique of Translation also stresses the naturalizing tendencies of Quebec theatre translation during the sixties and seventies. However, as Ladouceur shows, this pattern becomes much less rigid once the eighties set in, and there is a diversification of the kinds of plays translated.
Juliana de Zavalia examines the new visage of the Latino writer "within" the borders of the U.S. She uses polysystem theory to show how translation is part of a network of activities, including reading, rewriting and reviewing practices, which André Lefevere called "refraction." The emergence of Spanish-American writers prepared the way for the discovery of local Latinos. De Zavalia shows as well how translation is at the heart of the writing strategies of many of the new "hyphenated" writers. Her paper charts the flow of cultural traffic in the Americas since the 1960s, a flow that seems to partake more of an economy of neocolonialism than of postcolonialism.

That India should be a privileged site for translation studies today is not surprising. The wealth of India's "civilizational complexity" is such that it will not fit into facile, preconceived frameworks of analysis. Both the historical and the current multilingualism of India direct us to new conceptualizations of literary and cultural dynamics. Certainly India seems to offer a particularly fertile terrain for examination of translation questions. India is one the most intense versions of a "translation area" in the world today, with its many official languages, with its partially proprietary attitude toward English, with the tension generated between Indian literature written in English and Indian literature in English translation.

Salman Rushdie was surely conscious of launching a polemic when he declared in the introduction to *The Vintage Book of Indian Writing, 1947-1997* that there is a lack of "first-rate writing in translation." India's "best writing," he suggests, has been done in the English. He condemns at once vernacular-language writing and its poor translation into English. "There need not be an adversarial relationship between English-language literature and the other literatures of India," says Rushdie (1997, xvi), and yet he fires this adversity by making the outrageous claim that there is really nothing good written in the vernacular tongues.

The articles by Anita Mannur and N. Kamala provide the historical and contemporary context for Rushdie's remarks, though their authors would surely not endorse his conclusions. Both deal with India's intimate and conflicted relationship with English as the language of the ex-colonizer, as the link language of a linguistically fragmented territory and as the present-day vehicle of international commerce and culture. They agree with Rushdie that translated literature today has become marginalized with respect to Indian literature written in English, but question the conditions which have created this imbalance and insist on the power of translation to revitalize regional literary cultures.

Anita Mannur's essay is an informative study of a controversial topic: the non-visibility of translated Indian literature in relation to the
prominence of English-language (Anglo-Indian) literature. Why, despite the steady production of such translations, are they so absent from the national consciousness? Why is it so difficult for knowledge about Indian regional-language writers to transcend state boundaries? Mannur's explanation deals with both ideological and infrastructural factors, such as the sometimes ineffectual policies of the Sahitya Akademi, the rivalry between Hindi and other regional languages, the low status of Indian literature within the academic establishment, the problem of publishing and availability of books. Mannur points, however, to the promising emergence of new publishing ventures which emphasize Indian literature in translation.

These publishing ventures are precisely the subject of N. Kamala's article, and in particular the Macmillan series devoted to Indian literature in translation. Emphasizing many of the same concerns as Mannur regarding the lack of communication among regional literatures, Kamala greets the Macmillan series of translations with enthusiasm, only to confront some of the weaknesses of its presentation and format. In particular, Kamala examines the ways in which the series constructs an idealized image of India and Indian literature. Sensitive to the political dimensions of intra-Indian rivalries, Kamala identifies the Macmillan project as a reflection of the newly effervescent South Indian leadership in Indian politics and popular culture. The most serious critique which the first eleven books of the series seem to have inspired among its reviewers is neither the choice of novels nor the style of their translations but the practice of footnoting, encouraged by the series editor. The footnotes are a particular source of irritation to Indian readers, because they relentlessly explain realities familiar to all Indians. Who is the ideal reader of these translations meant to be, then? The tourist, the Indian reader, the North American student? Kamala argues for a series whose first and primary reader would be Indian. Translation, she argues, ought to be an "intra-national" activity. Her conclusions reinforce the thesis of several of the previous articles: that translation remains a powerful means for generating literary identities in India. Whether the translations are endocentric or exocentric, in reaction to or promoting the cause of English, the interplay between regional and cosmopolitan identities in India today provides for intense creative tensions.

Paul St-Pierre's article demonstrates in fine detail the ways in which the tensions of postcoloniality are played out on the scene of translation. In terms which recall the colonial occupation of Ireland, St-Pierre chooses to focus on the ways in which "law" and "language," two of the colonizers' principal instruments, are evoked in an Oriya novel—and how they are variously translated. *Chha Mana Atha Guntha (Six Acres and Thirty-Two Decimals)* is a novel written by the celebrated Oriya author Fakir Mohan Senapati and serialized between 1897 and 1899. Three translations, pub-
lished between 1967 and 1969, show remarkably different translation strategies which reflect different attitudes toward the colonial legacy—in particular with regard to the implied readership (regional, national or international?) and to the authority of the English language. Paradoxically, it is the translation which most explicitly sets itself within the British literary context which also best highlights the satirical, ironic mood of the text. The continued pertinence of the novel in Oriya society, its questioning of colonial power and the ideological power of translation is reinforced through St-Pierre’s references to a forthcoming, collective translation which will propose yet another version of the text.

In the final essay, Probal Dasgupta uses the political and linguistic aspects of postcoloniality as a starting point to take on the very broadest questions of knowledge creation and transfer—as well as the moral issue he refers to as “courage.” His essay, which takes the form of a kind of manifesto, is in fact a call for translation as a guarantee of modernity for the postcolonial world. Modernity demands that knowledge be translatable, that it be reformulatable within different languages, and therefore given body, rather than the abstract voice of universality. Translation becomes, therefore, a necessary means through which knowledge is tested, recontextualized, submitted to critical scrutiny. Cognitive accountability is a condition for modernity. The stories of “initiating cultures” must be retold by the receiving culture, unlocking its essential rather than contingent features. Dasgupta refers specifically to the retelling of scientific stories, a process he claims should not be confided to bureaucrats (who will produce official terminology) but to thinkers who make it a part of scientific practice and of the critique of science. The “hijack” of scientific work by the English language works against culturally healthy communities, the rethinking of terms and concepts, and the revitalization of the sense of wonder which accompanies this “radical respecification.” He argues that postcolonialism means formulating and practising a “post-missionary” attitude to knowledge, which includes an active traffic in translation.

Dasgupta talks of two waves of translating: the missionary enterprise, motivated by bureaucratic imperatives, and the new wave of “careful” translators, which creates a care-induced distance, “somewhat akin to speaking loudly to overcome the barrier of physical distance.” Dasgupta rejects both these approaches, arguing for “the cause of Reperception.” He is arguing for redress in the balance of trade, for more translation into Less Equipped Languages rather than toward More Equipped Languages. And this not in the name of narrow nationalism but of community: “A politics of Reperception has to work at the level of discourse, a flow of spoken and written activity where the performers are explicitly each other’s guests, taking and giving space and aware that this is the fundamental act of culture.”
There is a strain of idealism in Dasgupta’s call for courage in the construction of the postcolonial living space. His critique of science and of authoritarian discourse is also an appeal for more responsible and creative uses of language. His own essay contributes to this goal, to the extent that it mixes vocabularies and knowledge categories generally kept separate. Here the political aims of postcolonialism are blended with cognitive and moral critiques of scientific and authoritarian discourse. Dasgupta wants to disrupt the bureaucratic rationality that organizes thought for us. What are we to pay attention to? How are we to welcome distractions not provided by the purveyors of knowledge? Translators play a vital part in dealing with these questions, as they “are on the job of modifying the objects and patterns of people’s attention.” Translation theory, following Dasgupta, joins communications and cultural theory in criticizing the scientific enterprise and the political order which guarantees its credibility.

IV

Is it possible to conclude in favour of one or the other of the images that Amitav Ghosh provided to account for the power of translations? Surely such a single conclusion, whether it be in favour of the repressive force of translation, or, on the contrary, its liberating power, would be contrary to the aims of this volume. As a practice of mediation deeply embedded in patterns of domination and yet permitting newness to exist, translation both “separates and joins” (Venuti 1998). The effects of translation are best described in the mixed vocabulary used today to characterize the dynamics of globalization. On the one hand, the spread of international cliché produces effects of homogenization; on the other, meaningful engagements across cultures, in increasingly diverse modes, produce increased particularization. Relations of intercultural exchange perform on a continuum whose one extreme carries the force of non-translation (“translating out of, away from, against, a culture”) and whose opposite pole mobilizes the energy of cultural specificity (“translating for, into, with”). The tension between these poles is characteristic of the dialogue between cultural nationalism and postnational heterogeneity which is characteristic of the present moment.

We increasingly understand cultural interaction not merely as a form of exchange but as production. Translation then is not simply a mode of linguistic transfer but a translingual practice, a writing across languages. The economy of exchange gives way to a circulation governed by a “complex, decentered interactiveness” (Buell 1994, 337), which permits new kinds of conversations and new speaking positions. Borders do not simply divide and exclude, but allow the possibility to “interact and construct” (341). The double vision of translators is continuously redefining creative practices—and changing the terms of cultural transmission.
INTRODUCTION

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